

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) An image storage comprising:

a memory that stores a plurality of digital image data provided by a plurality of image providers;

a recorder that records a history of use by a plurality of image users with respect to each of the digital image data; and

a controller that controls a storing condition for each image provider by designating, based on the history of use recorded by the recorder, at least one of an amount of memory space that each image provider may utilize or a number of digital image data each image provider may store in the memory and controlling the amount of memory space or the number of digital image data for each image provider.

2. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 1, wherein the storing condition for each image provider is the number of the digital image data that the image provider is entitled to store in the memory.

3. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 1, wherein the recorder is designed to record a number of orders from the image users for each of the digital image data.

4. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 3, wherein the controller is designed to control the storing condition for each image provider in accordance with the number of orders in a predetermined period for the digital image data stored by the image provider.

5. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 4, wherein the storing condition for each image provider is the number of the digital image data that the image provider is entitled to store in the memory.

6. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 5, wherein the controller is designed to increase the number of the digital image data for the image provider if the number of orders for the digital image data of the image provider increases.

7. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 5, wherein the controller is designed to decrease the number of the digital image data for the image provider if the number of orders for the digital image data of the image provider decreases.

8. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 1, further comprising a searcher that searches the memory for digital image data fulfilling a given condition relating to the history recorded by the recorder.

9. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 8, wherein the given condition relates to the number of orders from the image users for each of the digital image data recorded by the recorder.

10. (Original) The image storage according to claim 9, wherein the given condition is that the number of orders for the digital image data is greater than a given number, whereby a popular digital image data fulfils the condition.

11. (Original) The image storage according to claim 9, wherein the given condition is that the number of orders for the digital image data is less than a given number, whereby an unappreciated digital image data fulfils the condition.

12. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 8, wherein the given condition is set on the image provider.

13. (Original) The image storage according to claim 12, wherein the given condition is that the number of the digital image data that the image provider is entitled to

store in the memory is greater than a given number, whereby a digital image data provided by a popular image provider fulfils the condition.

14. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 12, wherein the given condition is that the number of the digital image data that the image provider is entitled to store in the memory is less than a given number, whereby a digital image data provided by a new or unpopular image provider fulfils the condition.

15. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 1, further comprising printed matter production system that makes use of the digital image data in the memory for a production of printed matter.

16. (Original) The image storage according to claim 15, wherein the printed matter production system includes an acceptor that accepts from an image user a designation of a set of digital image data for an order of printed matter.

17. (Original) The image storage according to claim 16, wherein the printed matter production system further includes a selector that selects a type of printer suitable for individual production of the printed matter.

18. (Original) The image storage according to claim 15, wherein the printed matter production system includes a proposer that proposes a plurality of optional digital image data for selection by a plurality of potential image users for calendar, an acceptor that accepts the selections by the potential image users, and a decider that decides to realize a mass production of printed matter in accordance with the accepted selections.

19. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 18, wherein the printed matter production system further includes a selector that selects a type of printer suitable for mass production of the printed matter.

20. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 1, further comprising a selector that selects one of a plurality of types of printers for producing a print of a digital image data in accordance with an order from an image user.

21. (Original) The image storage according to claim 20, wherein the selector is designed to select the printer between a first type of printer suitable for individual production of the print of a digital image data and a second type of printer suitable for mass production of the print of the digital image data in accordance with the number of orders for producing prints of the digital image data from the image users.

22. (Previously Presented) A method of facilitating circulation of digital image data stored in a memory comprising:

storing digital image data of a plurality of image providers in the memory;
informing a plurality of image users of the digital image data;
accepting orders from an image user for a digital image data;
recording a history of the orders for each digital image data; and
controlling a storing condition for each image provider by designating, based on the history of the orders, at least one of an amount of memory space each image provider may utilize or a number of digital image data each image provider may store in the memory; and allowing one of the plurality of image providers to store new or previously stored image data based on the storing condition set for the image provider.

23. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 22, wherein the storing condition for each image provider is the number of the digital image data that the image provider is entitled to store in accordance with the number of orders accepted in a predetermined period for the digital image data of the image provider.

24. (Previously Presented) An image storage comprising:

a memory that stores a plurality of digital image data provided by a plurality of image providers;

a recorder that records a history of use, the history of the use including a total number of orders for all the image data provided by each of the plurality of image providers; and

a searcher that searches the memory for digital image data provided by one or more of the plurality of image providers that meets a given condition set on the history recorded by the recorder.

25. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 24, wherein the given condition is based on the number of orders from the image users for each of the digital image data recorded by the recorder.

26. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 25, wherein the given condition is based on a relationship between the number of orders for the digital image data and a given number, whereby digital image data having a specified popularity is searched for.

27. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 24, further comprising a controller, the controller entitling each of the plurality of image providers to store or continue to store a total of n image data in the memory, wherein n is a number of orders for all the image data provided by the image provider in a predetermined time.

28. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 27, wherein the given condition is based on a relationship between the number n of digital image data that the image provider is entitled to store in the memory and a given number, whereby digital image data having a specified popularity is searched for.

29.-33. (Cancelled)

34. (Currently Amended) A method of producing printed matter from a plurality of digital image data stored in a memory comprising:

storing a plurality of digital image data in the memory;

proposing a plurality of groups of optional digital image data for selection by a plurality of image users for printed matter;

accepting, for each image user, a selection of one digital image data from every group; and

producing a printed matter for each image user, each printed matter for each of the image users including a print of each digital image data selected by the image user such that each printed matter includes one digital image data from every group.

35. (Previously Presented) A method of producing printed matter from a plurality of digital image data stored in a memory comprising:

storing a plurality of digital image data in the memory;

proposing a plurality of groups of optional digital image data for selection by a plurality of image users for printed matter;

accepting, for each image user, a selection of one digital image data from every group;

informing each image user of a total result of the selections by the plurality of image users; and

allowing each image user to change one or more of the image user's accepted selections in view of the informed total result.

36.-39. (Cancelled)

40. (Previously Presented) A method of producing a product from a plurality of elements comprising:

proposing a plurality of groups of optional elements for selection by a plurality of users;

accepting the selections of one element from every group by each user;

informing each user of a total result of the selections by the plurality of users;

and

allowing each user to change one or more of the image user's accepted selections in view of the informed total result.

41. (Previously Presented) A data storage comprising:

a memory that stores a plurality of digital data files provided by a plurality of providers;

a recorder that records a history of use by a plurality of users with respect to each of the digital data files; and

a controller that controls a storing condition for each provider by designating at least one of an amount of memory space each image provider may utilize or a number of digital data files each image provider may store in the memory in accordance with at least one of the history of use by the plurality of users with respect to each of the digital data files and whether the provider has previously stored at least one digital data file in the memory.

42.-44. (Cancelled)

45. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 1, wherein the history of use includes a total number of orders for all the image data provided by each of the plurality of image providers.

46. (Previously Presented) The image storage according to claim 1, wherein the history of use includes a total number of orders by the plurality of image users for each image data.

47. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 22, wherein recording a history comprises maintaining a record of a total number of image data provided by each of the plurality of image providers and recording the total number for each image provider.